

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 26, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

We are pleased to hear that you are coming to visit Macomb, Illinois on April 30. As you know Illinois and Iowa are a crossroads for our country's infrastructure and transportation, so your lecture on "Investing in an America Built to Last" is a point that we understand and appreciate.

We need to ensure that our existing infrastructure can continue to provide the access and capabilities it has in the past. To do so we must invest in it so that our safety is not compromised and our economy can grow out of the fiscal issues our country is currently facing. Large projects through investing in our infrastructure will also create construction jobs, reduce traffic backups, improve air quality, and relieve congestion. There are so many positives that come from investing in this important piece of our nation. It is for that reason we have previously written to you about our support for the I-74 Bridge Project, which would address the current Mississippi River crossing in the Quad Cities. This bridge is structurally deficient and needs to be prioritized.

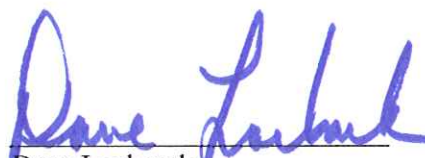
We would like to show you just why this project is so important and would like to invite you to see the current I-74 Bridge when you come over to western Illinois on April 30. We have been encouraging our colleagues here in Congress to support a long-term transportation bill so that large projects like this can move forward. We are also encouraging the states of Iowa and Illinois to prioritize this important project as well.

Now we would like to request your continued help in ensuring we have properly invested in our transportation infrastructure. Sometimes you have to go the final three feet to truly appreciate why certain issues and situations must be rectified and we would be happy to come with you on those last three feet to show you the problems we are facing with the I-74 Bridge. This bridge is an important addition to our local community, region, and states. By working together we can ensure that the people of Illinois and Iowa can safely have their needs met and encourage growth in our local and state economies.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to continuing our work to reinvest in the necessary infrastructure for our country to be safe and thrive.

Sincerely,


Bobby Schilling
Member of Congress


Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress